

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. What is the Religious Exemption?

A. Parents who have religious convictions against sending their children to school may petition the school board for religious exemption to compulsory school attendance.

Q. How do I claim a Religious Exemption?

A. Parents or guardians shall submit a written request to the School Board for exemption stating their religious beliefs that are in conflict with public school attendance along with supporting documentation to the School Board. Please include the student's name, age and primary physical address in the petition to the School Board.

Q. What type of supporting documentation must be sent to support my petition for Religious Exemption?

- One letter from a friend or relative that confirms the family's beliefs are sincere.
- One letter from a religious leader or clergy member, if the family has such an authority, that confirms the belief as spiritual in nature and/or genuine. If the family does not have a religious authority, that must be conveyed in their request for exemption.
- One letter from the student if they are 12 years of age or older stating that they also adhere to the religious beliefs of the parent.

Q. Will my petition be considered if I do not include the name, age and primary physical address of my child in the petition?

A. No, the petition will not be considered complete without the child's name, age and primary physical address.

Q. What happens after the School Board approves my petition for Religious Exemption?

A. You will be notified in writing when the petition for Religious Exemption has been granted. The letter will include each child's name for whom Religious Exemption has been granted. The religious exemption does not apply to children who are not of compulsory school attendance age.

Q. Is Religious Exemption the same thing as Home Instruction?

A. No. Home Instruction is an alternative to compulsory school attendance that has separate procedural requirements.

Q. Do I have to petition for religious exemption annually?

A. No. Religious Exemption lasts as long as your child is of compulsory school attendance age.

Q: Can Religious Exemption students enroll in classes on a part-time basis through Loudoun County Public Schools?

A: No. Only students in grades 7-12 who have been approved for home instruction or enrolled in private school, may be enrolled on a less-than-full-time basis in Loudoun County Public Schools.

Q. Who can I contact if I have a question about Religious Exemption that I do not see posted on this website?

A. Contact Gabrielle Carpenter, Student Services Coordinator, via phone, 571-252-1021, or email, Gabrielle.Carpenter@lcps.org